

Message Text

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NO. 22 FOR CARTER FROM PA

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TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT STEPHEN S. ROSENFELD OP-ED COLUMN
THE NEW YORK TIMES FRIDAY APRIL 1 HEADED "CARTER'S FAST
FOREIGN START."

2. JUST HOW IT WILL END FOR JIMMY CARTER AND THE RUSSIANS
WE CAN'T YET KNOW. THIS WEEK'S SALT HANGUP IN MOSCOW ADDS
SUSPENSE TO WHAT WAS ALREADY GREAT UNCERTAINTY. BUT WE
CAN KNOW HOW IT'S BEGINNING: IN A NOVEL, BOLD AND--NOT-
WITHSTANDING SOME CONTRARY APPEARANCES--A REASONABLY SYS-
TEMATIC WAY.

3. BY MOVING FAST ON SALT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE MIDDLE
EAST, THE PRESIDENT HAS GAINED AT HOME A POWER OF INITIA-
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TIVE, AND AT LEAST A TEMPORARY FREEDOM OF MANEUVER, FAR
SURPASSING HIS THIN ELECTORAL MANDATE. HE HAS TAKEN
MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE OF THE WIDESPREAD FEELINGS THAT IT WAS
TIME FOR A NEW APPROACH AND THAT THE NEW BOY DESERVES THE
CHANCE TO SHOW WHAT HE CAN DO.

4. THE LOOK-MA-NO-HANDS ASPECT TO HIS PUBLIC PRONOUNCE-

MENTS ON FOREIGN POLICY HAS JARRED THE FINE-PRINT READERS BUT HIS STARTLING CANDOR AND HIS MANNER OF COMMAND HAVE WON HIM A DEGREE OF POPULAR SUPPORT THAT RICHARD NIXON DIDN'T RECEIVE UNTIL HE'D ACTUALLY DONE SOMETHING. IT IS PRECISELY AT THIS MOMENT OF INITIAL REBUFF THAT THE BENEFITS OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE ARE MOST USEFUL--AND MOST LIKELY TO BE FORTHCOMING.

5. CARTER'S APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS PROVIDES THE BASE OF PUBLIC SUPPORT ON WHICH HIS OTHER INITIATIVES REST. HUMAN RIGHTS MAY BE THE ONLY FOREIGN POLICY ISSUE ON WHICH ANYTHING RESEMBLING MASS SUPPORT CAN BE MUSTERED. ALMOST ALL OTHER INTERNATIONAL ISSUES ARE ESOTERIC, OR CONDUCTIVE TO PARTISANSHIP OR SPECIAL PLEADING, OR DIVISIVE. ANY DIPLOMATIC INCLINATION TO RESHAPE HIS HUMAN RIGHTS DRIVE PROBABLY HAS TO BE FITTED TO THIS POLITICAL FACT. PRE-SUMABLY IT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH WHY CARTER SAID WEDNESDAY THAT, DESPITE THE SALT STALEMATE, HE WOULDN'T BACK OFF ON RIGHTS.

6. MY SENSE OF PUBLIC REACTION TO CARTER'S MIDEAST INITIATIVE IS THAT PEOPLE THINK IT'S SERIOUS AND FAIR. MY GUESS ON HIS SALT PACKAGE IS THAT, BEFORE MOSCOW, THE POLITICAL COMMUNITY APPRECIATED HIS STRATEGY AND, AFTER MOSCOW, A MUCH LARGER CONSTITUENCY, ITS NATIONALISM STIRRED BY SOVIET BLUNTNESS, WILL RALLY AROUND.

7. CRUCIALLY, CARTER HAS FRAMED HIS POSITIONS IN A FASHION DEFYING CONVENTIONAL LIBERAL-CONSERVATIVE, SOFT-HARD UNCLASSIFIED

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DEBATES, BOTH IN THE BUREAUCRACY AND IN THE CONGRESS AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE. FOR INSTANCE, HE GOT SCOOP JACKSON ABOARD A SALT POSITION TO BE NEGOTIATED BY PAUL WARNKE. MORE THAN SLEIGHT OF HAND IS INVOLVED. THE PRESIDENT HAS LIBERATED HIMSELF, AT LEAST IN THESE EARLY STAGES, FROM THE BUREAUCRATIC AND POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS SO FAMILIAR FROM OUR RECENT PAST. IN THE POST-MOSCOW TENSENESS, THIS SHOULD SERVE HIM PARTICULARLY WELL.

8. HE HAS STUNNED A LOT OF FOREIGN POLICY TYPES, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO'D HONED REPUTATIONS BY CRITICIZING HENRY KISSINGER BUT HADN'T IMAGINED THERE EXISTED THE SORT OF ALTERNATIVE HE HAS ASSEMBLED. HE'S DONE SO, MOREOVER, NOT BY MAKING A PUDDING OR SHOOTING FOR THE LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR BUT BY GOING FOR THE HIGHEST COMMON DENOMINATOR: THE POSITIONS HE ADVANCES, ESPECIALLY ON SALT AND THE MIDEAST, ARE MEANT TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM--OR SO I AM PREPARED TO THINK.

9. ALL THIS HAS PUT THE PRESIDENT INTO WHAT SEEMS TO ME TO BE A GOOD BARGAINING POSITION WITH THE RUSSIANS. WHETHER THIS IS ACTUALLY SO, OF COURSE, IS UNDERGOING A HEAVY TESTING NOW.

10. CARTER'S PROMPT START COMPELS THE RUSSIANS TO CONSIDER THAT HE IS THE MAN THEY WILL BE DEALING WITH FOR FOUR YEARS, IF NOT EIGHT YEARS. HE STARTED SO FAST THEY CAN'T EVEN COMPLAIN HE'S LET THINGS SLIDE INTO A CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION YEAR. THERE'S NOTHING IN IT FOR THE RUSSIANS IN WAITING.

11. THE BARGAINING ADVANTAGE HE REAPS FROM DEMONSTRATING THAT THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, THE CONGRESS AND THE BUREAUCRACY ARE SOLIDLY BEHIND HIM CANNOT BE OVEREMPHASIZED. IT CUTS DOWN THE POSSIBILITY OF TRICKS AND END RUNS AND FORCES THE KREMLIN TO DEAL WITH THE PRESIDENT, NOT WITH HIS POLITICAL UNCLASSIFIED

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OR INSTITUTIONAL RIVALS. IT PUTS ON THE KREMLIN THE BURDEN--A DIFFICULT ONE, AS WE CAN SEE FROM THE MOSCOW MEETINGS--TO RESOLVE ITS OWN INTERNAL ARGUMENTS AND TO COME UP WITH NEGOTIABLE POSITIONS.

12. SINCE CARTER OFFERED THE RUSSIANS NOT JUST A DEAL ON SALT BUT AN INVITATION TO ADDRESS COOPERATIVELY A RAFT OF OTHER POLITICAL AND BILATERAL PROBLEMS, THE RUSSIANS HAVE TO FIGURE THAT IT IS THE WHOLE OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES THAT IS ON THE TABLE. THEY ASKED FOR "DETENTE"? CARTER PUTS FORTH A BROAD APPROACH TO IT. HE HAS THE INITIATIVE. THEY MUST RESPOND.

13. THE RUSSIANS, WHO TEND TO DRAW THE BIG PICTURE MORE THAN WE DO, COULD WELL BE SEEING THIS ONE NOW: THE UNITED STATES HAS THE BEST MILITARY AND CIVILIAN TECHNOLOGY--TWO DIFFERENT CHALLENGES. IT HAS THE MORAL HIGH GROUND AND, IN THE TWO BIG TROUBLE SPOTS, IT HAS THE POLITICAL HIGH GROUND IN THE MIDEAST AND A CHANCE OF GAINING IT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. THE SOVIET UNION HAS--CONCEIVABLY, BUT FAR FROM CERTAINLY, GIVEN CARTER'S TOUGHNESS AND PUBLIC SUPPORT--A CRACK AT STRATEGIC SUPERIORITY. OTHERWISE, SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY COMES DOWN TO ENJOYING TROUBLE IN THE WEST AND ELSEWHERE, OR MAKING IT.

14. IF, AS SEEMS POSSIBLE, THE RUSSIANS HAVE SHELVED MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY DEPARTURES FOR THE DURATION OF THE STRUGGLE OVER THE SUCCESSION TO LEONID BREZHNEV, WHO REMINDED AMERICANS IN MOSCOW OF THE DYING POMPIDOU, THEN THEY WILL HAVE TO RETURN TO THE TABLE IN DUE TIME. CARTER, WELL PREPARED, IS WAITING. (END TEXT.)

CHRISTOPHER

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